

Message Text

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ACTION ARA-10

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 DHA-02 PM-04 NSC-05 SP-02 SS-15 CIAE-00

INR-07 NSAE-00 DODE-00 L-03 PRS-01 DPW-01 IO-11 /062 W

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R 141935Z JAN 76

FM AMEMBASSY SANTIAGO

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 6581

C O N F I D E N T I A L SANTIAGO 0298

EO 11652: GDS

TAGS: SHUM, PINT, CI

SUBJECT: TORTURE EVIDENCE

REF: A) STATE 7044, B) 75 SANTIAGO 8567

1. EMBASSY RECEIVED NO "DOCUMENTED EVIDENCE" OF TORTURE FROM CHILEANLAWYER IN DECEMBER, AND HAS RECEIVED NO SUCH EVIDENCE SINCE 1973 COUP - IF BY THAT IS MEANT ABSOLUTELY IRREFUTABLE PROOF. INFORMATION REPORTED TO DEPT BY US CATHOLIC CONFERENCE MAY REFER TO ALLEGATIONS REPORTED TO EMBASSY CONCERNING ALLEGED RECENT EXECUTIONS OF MOVEMENT OF REVOLUTIONARY LEFT (MIR) EXTREMISTS BY GOC SECURITY FORCES. THIS REPORT WAS CONTAINED IN REF B. SOURCES DID CLAIM THAT MIRISTAS HAD BEEN TORTURED BEFORE BEING KILLED. OTHER THAN PEACE COMMITTEE DOCUMENTS, HOWEVER, NO EVIDENCE CONCERNING ALLEGATION WAS GIVEN TO EMBASSY.

2. MOST INDICATIONS CONCERNING TORTURE BY GOC OF WHICH EMBASSY IS AWARE CONSIST OF STATEMENTS BY VICTIMS OF THEIR FAMILIES AND FRIENDS, SWORN OR OTHERWISE. SOME SOURCES CLAIM TO HAVE PERSONALLY EXAMINED AND PHOTOGRAPHED TORTURE VICTIMS; ONE PROTESTANT MINISTER TOLD US RECENTLY THAT PHOTOS SHOWING CLEAR EVIDENCE OF TORTURE HAD BEEN SENT TO US CHURCHES. EMBOFFS HAVE INTERVIEWED PERSONS WHO HAVE GIVEN CALM, DETAILED, CREDIBLE DESCRIPTIONS OF THEIR EXPERIENCES UNDER TORTURE, AND IN AT LEAST ONE CASE A BURN SCAR WAS DISPLAYED. IN ADDITION, MANY KNOWLEDGEABLE PERSONS TAKE TORTURE FOR
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GRANTED. IN FACT, HOWEVER, IN ALMOST ALL CASES INDICATIONS

COMING TO US AMOUNT TO WORD OF ACCUSER AGAINST THAT OF GOC.
ORDINARILY, METHODS OF TORTURE USED LEAVE LITTLE IF ANY
VISIBLE EVIDENCE.

3. EMBASSY BELIEVES THAT TORTURE HAS BEEN WIDELY AND ROUTINELY
USED BY GOC IN ITS INVESTIGATIONS, AND HAS SO REPORTED. THIS
JUDGMENT IS BASED ON OVERWHELMING WEIGHT OF ALL INFORMATION
AVAILABLE TO EMBASSY AND TO OTHER INTERESTED AGENCIES SUCH

AS PEACE COMMITTEE AND ICRC. BUT WE CANNOT ESTIMATE LEVE,
FREQUENCY, OR EXTENT OF ABUSE. "DOCUMENTARY EVIDENCE" EMBASSY
WOULD CONSIDER TO BE PROOF WOULD BE SUCH EVIDENCE AS EYEWITNESS
ACCOUNT OF US OFFICIAL (SINGLE SUCH ACCOUNT OF RELATIVELY
MINOR ABUSE WAS REPORTED IN DEFENSE ATTACHE IR 6 817 0155 75,
PHOTOS SHOWING INJURIES WHICH COULD NOT BE EXPLAINED AS
ACCIDENTAL, OR CONFESSION OR KNOWN GOC OFFICIAL INVOLVED IN
TORTURE. LACKING SUCH EVIDENCE, OBSERVERS MUST WEIGH SUCH
MATTERS AS CREDIBILITY AND MOTIVATION OF PERSONS CHARGING
TORTURE, AND CONSIDER COMMENTS OF GOC CONTACTS. MUCH OF WHAT
COMES TO PUBLIC ATTENTION APPEARS EXAGGERATED, UNFOUNDED, OR
SELF-SERVING.

4. EMBOFFS IN CONVERSATIONS WITH VARIOUS SOURCES HAVE NOTED
WILLINGNESS OF EMBASSY TO RECEIVE DOCUMENTARY EVIDENCE OF
TORTURE, AS HAVE DIPLOMATIC COLLEAGUES WITH WHOM EMBASSY
EXCHANGES INFORMATION. TO EMBASSY'S KNOWLEDGE, HOWEVER,
NO CONCRETE EVIDENCE SUCH AS THAT DESCRIBED ABOVE HAS BEEN
MADE AVAILABLE TO ANY SOURCE WITH WHICH WE ARE IN CONTACT.
POPPER

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